such a nature exists as to warrant a cut. Any policy of reducing the scale of salaries can only be made applicable to future entrants and the economy that will result thereby cannot be realised for many years to come.

Harbour.

6. It was exactly one year ago on the 1st of August 1936 that the Port of Cochin was declared a major port. The various works in connection with the Fourth Stage have been started and are making good progress. There is not much to be seen at present of these works round about the harbour area because most of the works are below water. The Fourth Stage dredging is nearly completed and many of the cylinders for the road and rail-bridge have been sunk to a level of about 80 feet below low water and satisfactorily tested. The railway embankment across Venduruthi is already made for several hundreds of yards, and a great quantity of railway materials, iron cylinders and steel girders have been received from the makers. The contract for the six large cranes required for the harbour has been given and the cranes will be of the new types at the Ports of Vizagapatam and Marmagoa. Much of the copper steel sheet piling required for the deep wharf has been delivered. The new pile driving plant has been erected and the work of driving the copper steel sheet piles will be started very soon. The Governments concerned have sanctioned the building of the Administration Block on the Willingdon Island, and the work has been started. It is hoped to finish this work early next year. In this connection I have to mention one matter which resulted in considerable saving in connection with the Fourth Stage Works. Though the declaration as a major port was made only in August last, the Harbour Authorities, in anticipation of a rise in prices, wisely invited tenders for steel and iron works and with the consent of the Governments concerned placed orders for the dredging plant and certain other materials as early as May 1936. It should be observed that on account of the rearmament programme of the Governments in Europe there has been a rapid rise in the price of all iron and steel materials, and in fact it has become difficult even to ensure prompt delivery at these high prices. The action of the Harbour Authorities in wisely placing the orders in May 1936 avoided what otherwise would have meant a large excess on the Fourth Stage estimates amounting to more than Rs. 12 lakhs. We are under obligation to the Administrative Officer Mr. Bristow for the wise step that he took in this direction. We have every reason to be satisfied

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with the way in which the sudden rise in prices at the very outset of the Fourth Stage Works was foreseen and averted. On the whole it may be expected that notwithstanding the rise in prices the total expenditure on the Fourth Stage Works will not be much in excess of what was anticipated at the time of the preparation of the estimates. As I explained in an earlier speech last year our total commitments for the Fourth Stage Works by way of advances to the Harbour Authorities is about Rs. 75 lakhs inclusive of the cost of the new dredging plant. Towards this commitment we have so far paid Rs. 33·80 lakhs.

7. In addition to the works undertaken by the Harbour Authorities the Fourth Stage Works of the Harbour involves the diversion and extension of the railway line to the Willingdon Island. The South Indian Railway Company have been entrusted with this construction and the work is already taken on hand. This work is estimated to cost approximately Rs. 12·50 lakhs. A special staff has been appointed for acquiring the necessary lands for the railway extension. According to the arrangements now made, the harbour terminal station at the Willingdon Island would become the terminus for all passenger trains and there would be two new passenger stations at Ernakulam, one at the north of the town, and the other at the southern end. The existing railway station at Ernakulam is intended to be used purely as a goods station for local goods traffic. That portion of the railway which is within the port limits will be constructed at the expense of the Harbour Authorities. Arrangements have been made with the South Indian Railway Company for working the entire extension as part of the Shoranur—Ernakulam railway system.

Communications.

8. Though with the extension of the railway line to the harbour the fullest facilities will be available for the handling of traffic, a great deal remains yet to be done in completing the railway connections to open up the hinterland of the Harbour. The opening up of communications with the hinterland by means of railways and roads is one of the necessary corollaries of building up a port. With the decision to construct the Cochin Port as a first class port, the Governments concerned are automatically committed to the policy of providing means of communication to the interior. The magnificent waterway that lies along the entire coastline provides a natural means of communication which is unrivalled from the point of view of economic transport. So far as the areas served by the backwater are concerned there is not very much more to be

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